Date Adopted: 01.11.2026

ENIL YOUTH NETWORK CONSTITUTION

Plain Language version

Organisation name

Article 1 – (1) The organisation is called “European Network on Independent Living” (ENIL). ENIL has a youth group called the “European Network on Independent Living Youth Network” (ENIL Youth Network).

Purpose

Article 2 – (1) The ENIL Youth Network works for the rights and interests of disabled young people within ENIL and at European level. It follows ENIL’s principles and the Independent Living philosophy. It supports ENIL’s work.

(2) The ENIL Youth Network connects disabled young people aged 18–35 from Council of Europe member countries. Youth is a time when people move from childhood to adulthood. It is also a time to learn about independence and how we depend on each other. For ENIL Youth, people aged 18–35 are young people.

Core principles

Article 3 – (1) The ENIL Youth Network follows these core principles:

a) a) Youth-led

b) b) Youth work and non-formal education

c) c) Human rights-based approach

d) d) Inclusion of disabled young people with all types of impairments

Strategic plan of the ENIL Youth Network

Article 4 – (1) The ENIL Youth Network reviews its strategic plan every three years. The ENIL Youth Board and the ENIL Board must both approve it.

(2) The Youth General Assembly agrees the work priorities. Every December, the Youth Board prepares a workplan for the next year. The workplan is then presented to the annual ENIL face-to-face staff meeting for approval. This helps keep the work of ENIL and ENIL Youth aligned.

(3) The ENIL Youth Network focuses on issues that affect disabled young people. It also works on human rights issues that affect disabled people in general.

Membership of the ENIL Youth Network

Article 5 – (1) Full membership is free. It is open to disabled young people aged 18–35 from Council of Europe member countries.

(2) Associated membership is free and open to:

a. non-disabled people aged 18–35 from Council of Europe member countries
b. disabled and non-disabled people aged 18–35 from countries outside the Council of Europe.

(3) The Youth Board manages ENIL Youth Network membership.

Leaving or ending membership

Article 6 – (1) A member who wants to leave the ENIL Youth Network should email the Youth Board.

(2) Membership ends if the person is no longer aged 18–35; They stay ENIL members, but they are no longer members of the Youth Network.

(3) If a person who is a full member moves their permanent residence outside a Council of Europe member country, they become an associated member.

(4) The Youth Board may remove a member if the member:

a) does not follow the Independent Living Principles;

b) brings the network into disrepute;

c) cannot be contacted for three years.

(5) The Youth Board decides on membership removal based on section (4). It must inform the member within 14 days.

(6) A member can appeal the decision within 30 days after receiving the formal notification.

Governing bodies of the ENIL Youth Network

Article 7 – (1) The ENIL Youth Network has two governing bodies: the Youth General Assembly (Youth GA) and the Youth Board.

Structure of the Youth General Assembly

Article 8 – (1) The Youth GA is made up of full members. Associated members can attend, but they cannot vote.

(2) The Youth Network Coordinator cannot vote. They oversee the voting and counting process.

(3) The ordinary Youth GA is held every three years in May. The Youth Board decides the date, time and online venue. Members must receive the notice by email at least 30 days before the meeting. The notice must include the date, time, venue and agenda.

(4) If more than half of the Youth Board seats become vacant, the remaining Youth Board members or the ENIL Secretariat must call an extraordinary Youth GA within 15 days.

Proposals for the Youth General Assembly agenda

Article 9 – (1) Any member can propose a change to the Constitution. The proposal must be in writing and sent to the Youth Board at least 15 days before the Youth GA.

(2) Any member can propose an item for discussion at the Youth GA. The proposal must be in writing and sent to the Youth Board at least 15 days before the meeting. The Youth Board prepares the agenda. If an issue is not discussed, a member can raise it under any other business.

Quorum and decision-making

Article 10 – (1) The Youth GA has a quorum when two youth representatives from each ENIL region take part.

(2) A decision passes when more than half of the people voting support it. The Youth Board should follow the decisions of the Youth GA.

(3) If there is no quorum, more than half of all full members should vote electronically on the Youth Board election within 10 working days after the Youth GA.

(4) If more than half of the members do not vote within those 10 working days, the votes already cast are valid. The candidates with the most votes are elected.

Duties of the Youth General Assembly

Article 11 – (1) The Youth GA:

a) elects the new Youth Board;

b) adopts changes to the Constitution;

c) gives advice on the strategic plan for the next term; and

d) decides on other issues proposed by members.

Structure of the ENIL Youth Board

Article 12 – (1) The Youth Board has an odd number of members: 5, 7 or 9.

(2) Full members elect the Youth Board. If the Youth GA does not have a quorum, the election follows Article 10(3).

(3) All Youth Board members must be disabled young people who meet the membership requirements.

(4) The Youth Board should include people from different countries, regions, cultures and impairment groups. A balanced gender representation should also be sought.

(5) A Youth Board term starts at one Youth GA and ends at the next Youth GA.

Applications for the Youth Board

Article 13 – (1) Candidates must send their application to the ENIL Secretariat no later than five working days before the Youth GA.

(2) The application must include a photo, a short biography, a CV and a cover letter.

(3) The cover letter should explain why the person wants to join the Youth Board, what skills or experience they can bring, and their three priorities for the term.

(4) The application must be in English.

(5) Reasonable accommodations must be provided when requested.

Limits on Youth Board re-election

Article 14 – (1) A Youth Board member can serve a maximum of two terms. The terms can be consecutive or non-consecutive.

(2) At most 50% of the current Youth Board can be elected for another term.

(3) If more than 50% of the current Youth Board stand for election, only the candidates with the most votes can continue until the 50% limit is reached.

(4) An interim appointment to fill a vacant seat does not count as a term if the appointment starts more than six months after the term began.

(5) The following former Board members cannot stand for re-election:

a) a) people who resigned because of serious disagreements with ENIL Board members, Youth Board members or ENIL staff;

b) b) people who resigned because of a conflict of interest, while that conflict continues; and

c) c) people removed under Article 15(6).

Responsibilities and duties of the Youth Board

Article 15 – (1) The Youth Board is responsible for carrying out the Youth Network's strategic plan.

(2) Youth Board members should contribute to the strategic plan and yearly workplans as much as they can and as their availability allows.

(3) The Youth Board's responsibilities are set out in its Terms of Reference (TOR). Board members must accept the TOR when they are elected.

(4) Youth Board members must act professionally when representing ENIL Youth. The TOR explains the expected conduct.

(5) The ENIL Secretariat or ENIL Board can give the Youth Board or its members tasks or projects that support ENIL's goals.

(6) If a Board member does not follow the TOR, the Youth Chair and Vice-Chair can end their term with the agreement of the ENIL Co-Chairs.

Working language of the Youth Board

Article 16 – (1) The working language of the Youth Board and Youth Network is English. A sign language can also be used when English translation is provided. Exceptions can be made for people with intellectual impairments.

Youth Board meetings and working procedures

Article 17 – (1) The Youth Board meets at least three times a year. Meetings can be in person, online or hybrid.

(2) The first Youth Board meeting after the Youth GA must take place within one month after the election. At this meeting, Board members elect a Chair and Vice-Chair by a simple majority from the candidates who put themselves forward. The Board also adopts the TOR for the term.

(3) More than half of the Board members must be present for a meeting to have a quorum.

(4) The Chair and Vice-Chair should make every reasonable effort to attend Board meetings.

(5) If both cannot attend a meeting, they should inform the other Board members in writing seven days before the meeting.

(6) The Vice-Chair leads the meeting when the Chair is absent. If both are absent, the Board elects an acting Chair by majority vote.

(7) More than half of the Board members must support a decision for it to pass.

Vacancies on the Youth Board

Article 18 – (1) A Board seat can become vacant because a member dies, is removed or resigns. The remaining Board members can decide how to fill the vacancy. After that process, the Chair and Vice-Chair can appoint an interim Board member.

Relationship between the Youth Board and ENIL

Article 19 – (1) The ENIL Youth Network is a subgroup of ENIL.

(2) The Youth Board can make its own decisions. However, the ENIL Board must approve decisions that affect ENIL's work or reputation.

Reporting to the ENIL Board

Article 20 – (1) The Youth Board must regularly report on its work to the ENIL Board, including at every ENIL Board meeting. It can do this through a youth rapporteur or a short written report. The ENIL Board must receive copies of Youth Board papers and minutes.

(2) Before entering into a partnership with another organisation or applying for external funding, the Youth Board must get approval from the ENIL Executive Director or another authorised management body.

Communication with the Youth Board

Article 21 – (1) The Youth Board uses enilyouthboard@gmail.com for official communication with members.

(2) The Youth Board uses its social media accounts according to its Communications Strategy and the ENIL Secretariat's instructions.

Changes to the Constitution

Article 22 – (1) In exceptional circumstances, the Youth Board can propose changes to the Constitution outside the Youth GA if this is necessary for the network to function. The Youth Board must use the procedure in Article 22(2).

(2) Members have 15 days to challenge a proposed change in writing by emailing the address in Article 21(1). If no one challenges the change within 15 days, the change takes effect.

First Terms of Reference

Provisional Article 1 – The Youth Board will adopt the first version of the TOR at its December 2026 meeting.

Article 23 – This Constitution has 23 articles and one provisional article.

Glossary

Appeal: A request to review a decision.

Associated member: A person who can join ENIL Youth but does not have full membership rights.

Constitution: The rules that explain how the ENIL Youth Network works.

Conflict of interest: A situation where another interest could affect a person's role or decision.

Disrepute: Damage to the good name or reputation of the network.

ENIL Board: The main governing board of ENIL.

ENIL Secretariat: The ENIL staff team that supports the organisation's work.

External funding: Money from outside ENIL, such as a grant from another organisation.

Full member: A disabled young person who meets the rules for full membership.

Governing body: A group that makes decisions for an organisation.

Interim: Temporary. An interim Board member serves until a longer-term solution is in place.

Non-formal education: Learning outside formal school or university. It can include workshops, training and group activities.

Quorum: The minimum number of people needed for a meeting to make valid decisions.

Simple majority: More than half of the votes that are cast.

Strategic plan: A plan that sets the main goals and priorities for a period of time.

Terms of Reference (TOR): A document that explains a group's role, responsibilities and rules.

Youth General Assembly (Youth GA): A meeting of ENIL Youth full members where important decisions are made.

Youth Board: The elected group that leads and represents the ENIL Youth Network.

Youth Chair and Vice-Chair: The two Youth Board members who lead the Board's work and meetings.

Youth work: Work that supports young people's learning, participation in all aspects of life, and development.